

Fishing Tournament Advisory Committee

February 15, 2006

DRAFT RULE SUMMARY

DEFINITIONS

- Created a new definition for NR 20.40 - "**Aquatic invasive species**" means non-indigenous water or wetland-dwelling organisms or their hybrids whose introduction into aquatic ecosystems causes or is likely to cause adverse economic, recreational or environmental impacts or harm to human health. – Currently found in NR 198 - AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL GRANTS.
- Amended the definition of a "**Fishing tournament**" to make it more general/broad – "Fishing tournament" means any organized fishing activity, on any water of the state where competition is the primary intent, and where prizes or incentives are awarded.
- Created several new definitions for NR 20.40 which refer to specific types of tournament formats, processes, and regulatory categories:
 - "**Immediate-release tournament**", "**Live-release tournament**", "**Off-site weigh-in**"
 - "**Permitted fishing tournament**", "**Permitted fishing tournament boat days**"
 - "**Permitted fishing tournament participant days**", "**Possess**" or "**Possession**"
 - "**Traditional fishing tournament**", "**Weigh-in**"

PERMIT REQUIRED

- Establishes tournament size thresholds for requiring a permit based on lake size (see table).

<u>Lake size (acres)</u>	<u>Minimum number of boats</u>	<u>Minimum number of participants</u>
<1,000	10	30
1,000 – 2,999	15	40
3,000 +	20	50
Great Lakes, WI-MN, WI-IA	20	50

- Requires a permit for tournaments consisting of 10 boats or 30 participants on inland rivers.
- Requires a permit for all live release tournaments with a weigh-in.
- Requires a permit for all tournaments limited to trout on inland waters.

NO PERMIT REQUIRED

- Exempts the permit requirement for tournaments with fewer than 10 boats (open water) or 30 participants (ice fishing), if they are not live release events with a weigh-in and they are not limited to trout on inland waters.
- Exempts the permit requirement for tournaments that do not require anglers to fish specified dates or waters (e.g. year-long resort/bar tournaments; statewide "any water" tournaments),

PERMIT APPLICATION FEES

- Non-refundable permit application fees are established that vary depending on the number of boats or participants (see below).

<u>Number of Boats</u>	<u>Number of Participants</u>	<u>Tournament Application Fee</u>
< 50	<100	\$50
50-99	100-199	\$100
100-149	200-299	\$150
150-199	300-399	\$200
200 +	400 +	\$250

- No application fee for tournaments limited to youth under the age of 18.

PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESS

- Department begins accepting permits **August 1**.
- Applications received **August 1 – the last Friday in September** subject to lottery drawing if monthly limits are exceeded. The department must notify the applicant that the event is subject to drawing and allows 7 days to change date or location.
- **Traditional fishing tournaments** are not included in the drawing unless they are competing with other traditional fishing tournaments for limited fishing tournament permits for a body of water (i.e. “grand-fathered”).
- Applicants are notified by **November 7** of approval or denial of permit (based on lottery drawing results).

LIMITS ON SIZE AND NUMBER OF FISHING TOURNAMENTS

- Establishes a maximum size (number of boats or number of participants) a fishing tournament can be based on lake size.
- Establishes monthly maximums for both open-water and ice fishing tournaments based on an index of pressure calculated as:
 - Open-water (Permitted fishing tournament boat days) = (number of boats) * (number of tournament days).
 - Ice fishing (Permitted fishing tournament participant days) = (number of participants) * (number of tournament days).
- Monthly maximums for open-water took into account maximum public access standards found in NR 1.91(5)(b). See table below.

Lake Size	Number of Lakes	Maximum # of Boats	Maximum # of Days	Maximum # of Tournaments	Maximum Pressure Boat*Days	Comments
<150 acres	13,450	No tournaments	No tournaments	No tournaments	No tournaments	
150 - 299	434	15	2	2	60	1 boat / 15 acres
300 - 449	144	23	2	2	90	1 boat / 15 acres
450 - 999	169	30	3	3	270	1 boat / 25 acres
1000-1999	75	50	3	3	450	1 boat / 30 acres
2000-2999	21	75	3	3	675	1 boat / 30 acres
3000-3999	14	100	4	4	1600	1 boat / 30 acres
4000-6999	10	131	4	4	2100	1 boat / 40 acres*
7000-9999	5	188	4	4	3000	1 boat / 40 acres*
10,000 +	9	No limit	No limit	No limit	No limit	

- **Maximum number of boats** calculated as the (top-end acreage) divided by (number of acres per boat)*75%.
- **Maximum number of days** and **maximum number of tournaments** were arbitrarily selected.
- **Maximum pressure** is the product of (maximum number of boats)*(maximum number of days)*(maximum number of tournaments).

- Monthly maximums for ice fishing were calculated using all arbitrary values (see below), and no public access standards for ice fishing exist.

Lake Size	Number of Lakes	# of Anglers Permit Required	Maximum # of Participants	Maximum # of Days	Maximum # of Tournaments	Maximum Pressure Participant*Days
<150 acres	13,450	No tournaments	No tournaments	No tournaments	No tournaments	No tournaments
150 - 299	434	30	100	2	2	400
300 - 449	144	30	200	2	2	800
450 - 999	169	30	300	3	3	2700
1000-1999	75	40	500	3	3	4500
2000-2999	21	40	750	3	3	6750
3000-3999	14	50	1,000	4	4	16000
4000-6999	12	50	No limit	No limit	No limit	No limit
7000-9999	5	50	No limit	No limit	No limit	No limit
10,000 +	9	50	No limit	No limit	No limit	No limit

- Allows lakes less than 150 acres to be included in a permitted fishing tournament if part of a chain of lakes that has a total acreage larger than 150 acres and can be navigated to by the boats used by participants during the fishing tournament permitted for that lake on that day.
- Clarifies permits issued for any combination of lakes within a chain of interconnected lakes will count toward the maximum number of permitted fishing tournament days for the entire chain.
- Establishes that for boundary water lakes, the limits on the number of permitted fishing contests shall be determined based on the Wisconsin acreage.
- Establishes monthly maximum number of tournaments on rivers. Mississippi River maximums are the same as those used by MN. The Fox, Wolf, and Wisconsin River maximums are the same as the St. Croix (WI-MN) based on their similarity.
- Limits fishing tournaments Mississippi River pools to no more than three.
- Establishes specific boundary for fishing tournaments on Lake St. Croix (HWY 10 bridge at Prescott upstream to the Acola Bar) – pseudo-defines Lake St. Croix.
- Establishes monthly limits for other rivers (2 per month per 20 miles).

ADDITIONAL FISHING CONTEST PERMITS

- Establishes a procedure by which additional tournament permits above monthly maximums for waters.

DISPOSITION OF DEAD FISH

- Requires permit applicants to provide a plan for disposition of dead fish that result from the fishing tournament.

GENERAL PROVISIONS AND PERMIT CONDITIONS

- Eliminates the restriction requiring two-week separation between events conducted by the same sponsor.
- Prohibits permitted fishing tournaments during the three-day Memorial Day weekend, Fourth of July or three-day Labor Day weekend. Allows an exemption to traditional fishing tournaments.
- Provides the department authority to regulate state-owned public access used by tournaments (e.g. the number of parking spots or portion of access used) to minimize user conflicts based on the following criteria:
 - To allow adequate access to the water for non-tournament users.
 - To accommodate other activities scheduled to use the same access.
 - Other reasons needed to protect resources or limit user conflict.
- Requires consistent and obvious marking of tournament boats.
- Establishes criteria to be followed by tournament participants in order for an event to be considered an “immediate release tournament”. The criteria specify what type of fish handling can be conducted on the water without constituting possession.
- Establishes restriction for “live release tournaments”.
 - No live-release tournaments for walleye, sauger, and their hybrids from Memorial Day to Labor Day.
 - No live-release tournaments with an off-site weigh-in for bass during July and August.
 - No live-release tournaments for largemouth bass on waters or connected waters where largemouth bass virus or other transmittable diseases are known to occur.
 - No live-release tournaments for muskellunge, northern pike, sturgeon, or trout with an off-site weigh-in.
- Establishes standards for fish holding equipment and fish handling procedures for “live release tournaments” (much of this is from Keeping Bass Alive).
 - Boats must have working live wells.
 - On-shore holding tanks used to hold fish during the weigh-in process must have the capacity sufficient to hold at least 1 gallon of water per pound of fish held.

- The holding tanks on shore are equipped with aeration or oxygenation systems capable of maintaining the dissolved oxygen at 5 ppm or higher.
- Fish shall not be held in water-filled bags for longer than five minutes. Fish shall be held in live wells while anglers wait to weigh-in their catch.
- Establishes criteria for off-site weigh-ins.
 - Fish holding equipment must be the same as “live release tournament requirements”.
 - Establishes Maximum number of fish in off-site weigh-in of 50.
 - Establishes a two hour time limit for fish to be out of water.
 - Department must provide written approval of any off-site weigh-in.
- Provides authority to write conditions to prevent waste of the resource when environmental conditions warrant.
 - Department may require immediate release.
 - Department may restrict area fish or distance traveled by anglers.
 - Department may require redistribution.
- Provides department authority to modify or revoke a permit at any time to protect natural resources.
 - Circumstances include: discovery of a fish disease, unusual and potentially detrimental water quality, such as high water temperature and low dissolved oxygen, and unusual weather event.

REGULATION OF AIS

- Require the fishing tournament sponsor to assure inspection and removal of all aquatic vegetation and aquatic invasive species from boats and trailers of participants entering and leaving water accesses.
 - Require the fishing tournament sponsor to assure decontamination of participant boats’ live wells and bilge pumps prior to the tournament and prior to moving the boat to another body of water during the tournament.
 - Prohibit participants in permitted fishing tournaments that include multiple lakes from launching a boat previously used in body of water known to contain aquatic invasive species into a water not known to contain aquatic invasive species in the same day.
 - Prohibit participants in permitted open water fishing tournaments from using live minnows.
- OR
- Prohibit participants in permitted open water fishing tournaments from using live minnows not purchased in the state of Wisconsin.